

ARE DISCARDS A SUBSTANTIAL FOOD SOURCE FOR BENTHIC COMMUNITIES?

Jochen Depestele^{1,2}, Marie-Joëlle Rochet³, Ghislain Dorémus⁴, Pascal Laffargue³ and Eric Stienen⁵

SPATIO-TEMPORAL PATTERNS IN FOOD SUBSIDIES PROVIDED BY DISCARDS TO SCAVENGING SEABIRDS IN THE BAY OF BISCAY

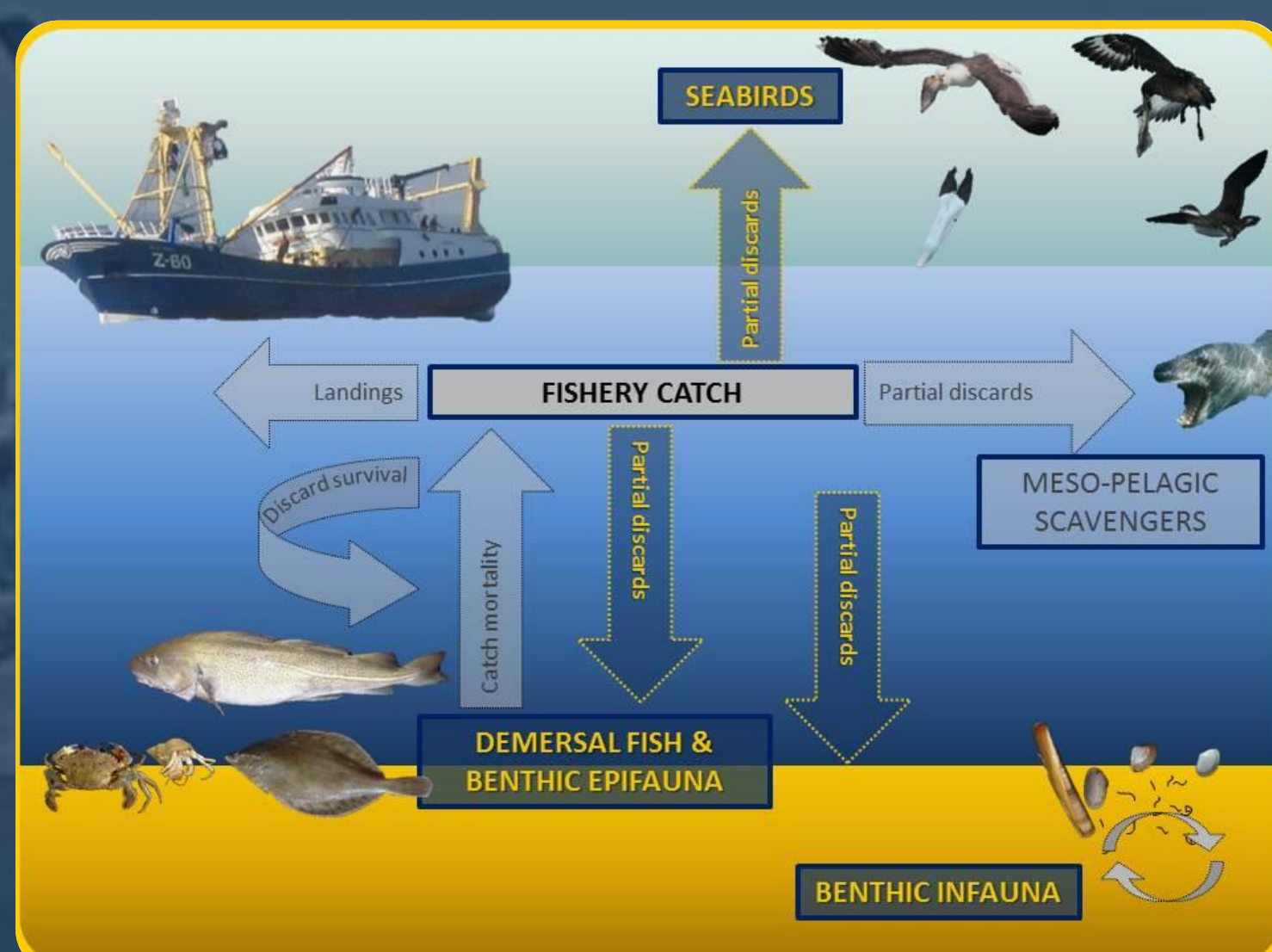


Introduction

- ✓ Fishery discards = food source for marine scavengers
- ✓ Availability for benthic communities depends on
 - Discard selection by scavenging seabirds
 - Variability of discards and seabirds in space and time

Objectives

- Defining the **finest spatial and temporal resolution** of discard and seabird distribution
- Spatio-temporal **quantification of discard consumption**
- Allow assessing whether discards are **a food subsidy and/or facultative food source?**



Discard consumption Success Index (DSI)

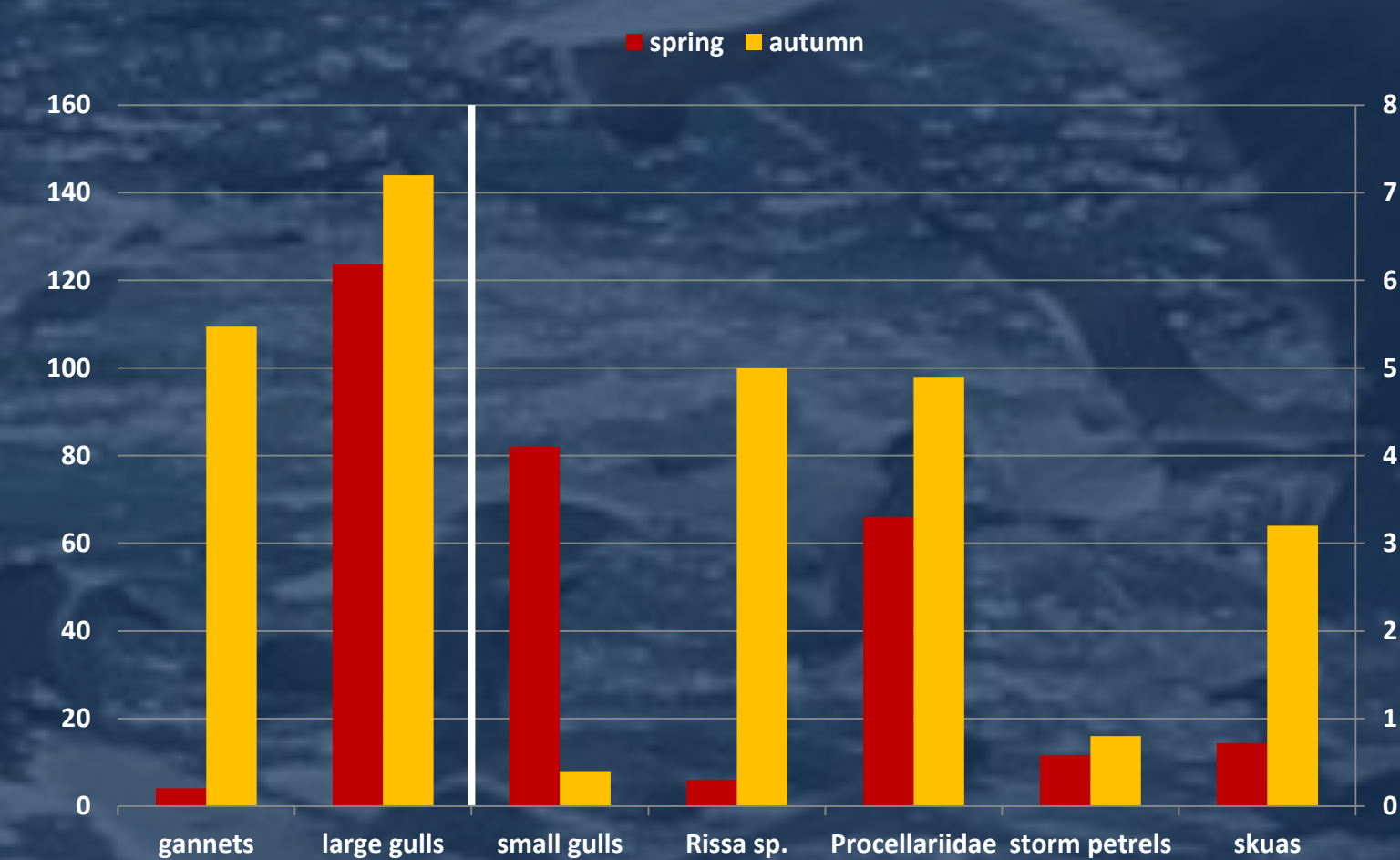
- ✓ **Discard proportion** swallowed during experimental discarding studies depends on
 - Discard morphology 'i'
 - Ship followers' community 'j' composed of foraging guilds



$$DSI_{(i,j)}$$

Ship following scavenging index (ScavI)

- ✓ Measuring the **relative attraction of foraging guilds to fishing vessels** rather than natural food



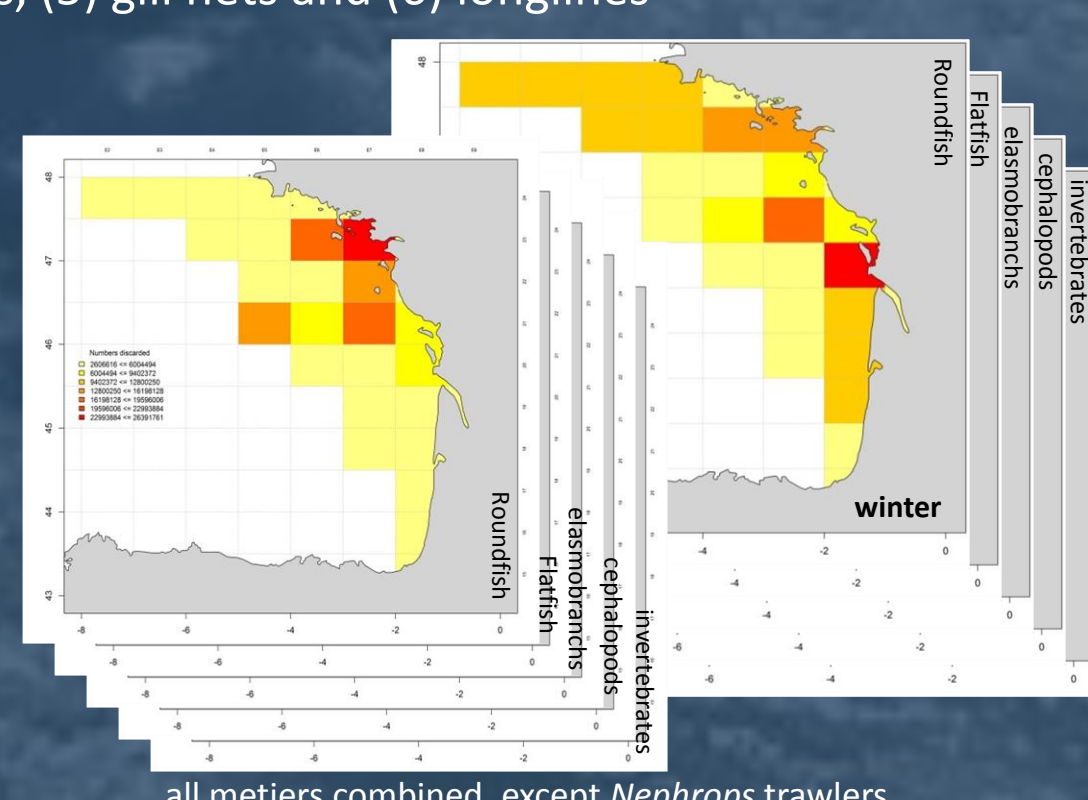
$$ScavI_{foraging\ guild} = \left[\frac{n_{ship\ followers}}{n_{density}} \right]_{foraging\ guild}$$

Spatio-temporal distribution of discards

- ✓ Distribution of discard types by spatio-temporal unit 'k'

$$Discards_{(i,k)}$$

- Six metiers:
 - (1) Bottom trawls targeting demersal fish and cephalopods, (2) targeting crustaceans, (3) midwater trawls targeting small pelagic fish, (4) targeting demersal fish and cephalopods, (5) gill nets and (6) longlines
- Spatial units
 - ≥10 fishing operations, ≥3 fishing trips
- Temporal strata
 - Pooled to match seabird data



Nr of ship following birds in community 'j' in spatio-temporal unit 'k'

$$C_k = C_j = \sum_{foraging\ guild} (ScavI_{foraging\ guild} * n_{k,foraging\ guild})$$

Nr of discards consumed in spatio-temporal unit 'k'

$$DSI_{i,k} * Discards_{i,k}$$

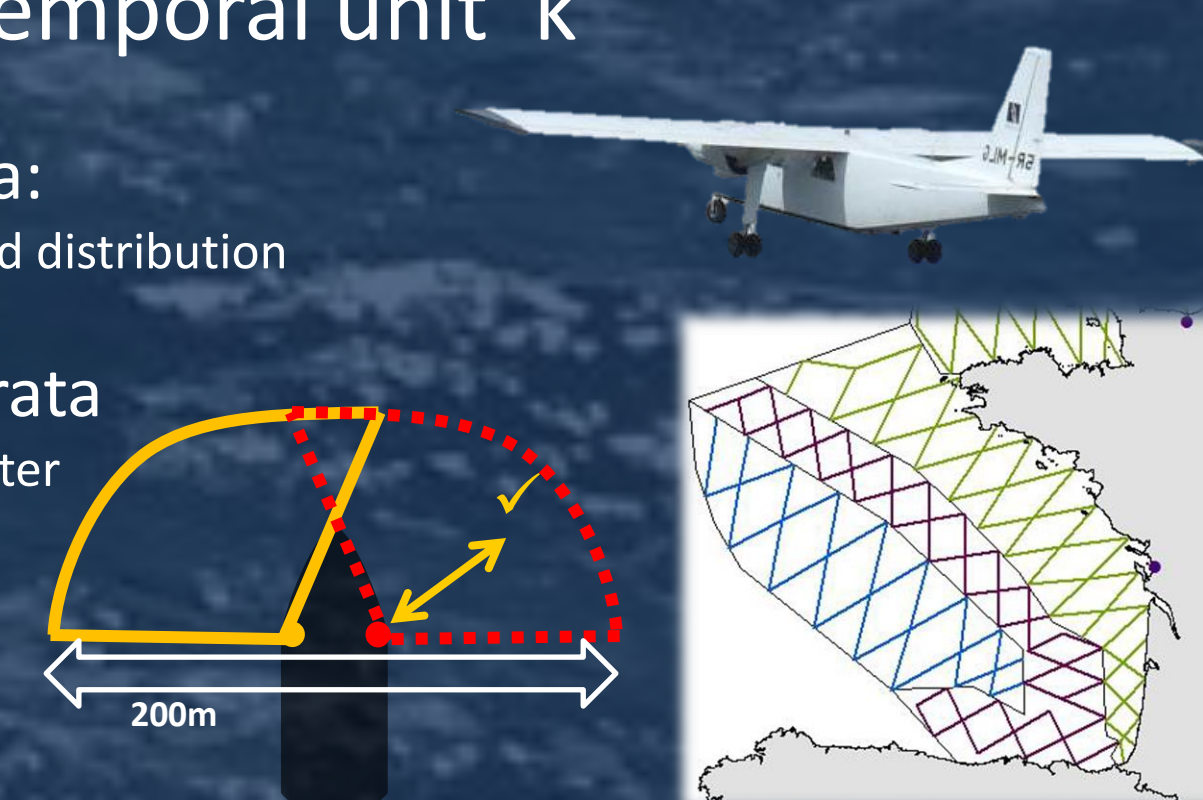
$$with\ DSI_{i,k} = DSI_{i,j} = f(C_j)$$

Spatio-temporal distribution of foraging guilds

$$n_{k,foraging\ guild}$$

- ✓ Distribution of foraging guilds by spatio-temporal unit 'k'

- Spatial strata: Limited by discard distribution
- Temporal strata: Summer and winter



Quantification of discards for benthic communities will become available on

WWW.BENTHIS.EU



¹ Institute for Agricultural and Fisheries Research (ILVO), Ankerstraat 1, 8400 Oostende, Belgium



² University of Ghent (UGent), Marine Biology Section, Campus De Sterre, S8, Krijgslaan 281, 9000 Gent, Belgium



³ Institut français de recherche pour l'exploitation de la mer (IFREMER) B.P. 21105, 44311 Nantes CEDEX 03, France



⁴ Université de La Rochelle Observatoire PELAGIS, 5 allée de l'Océan, 17 000 La Rochelle, France



⁵ Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO) Kliniekstraat 25, 1070 Brussel, Belgium